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Natural Resource Challenges For A Culturally Diverse Pacific Northwest: An Outdoor Recreation Model

by Dale L. Hom



NATURAL RESOURCE CHALLENGES
FOR A CULTURALLY DIVERSE PACIFIC NORTHWEST:
AN OUTDOOR RECREATION MODEL

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ABSTRACT

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Title: Natural Resource Challenges for a Culturally Diverse Pacific Northwest: An Outdoor Recreation Model

Abstract: Resource managers have not been proactive in the delivery of quality customer services to ethnic minorities which is evidenced by low participation in outdoor recreation. Resource agencies are providing benefits for the American mass culture, and inadvertently excluding ethnic minority groups. Demographic changes include increased cultural diversity in Washington State. Utilizing concepts of strategic marketing, recreation managers and providers can better understand this "new" customer. Each ethnic minority group has its unique differences, needs and concerns which must be considered in service delivery. Asian, Black, Hispanic and Native American concerns and needs are discussed. Recommended strategies are identified to improve customer services for a culturally diverse population in the Pacific Northwest.

Others Who Might Find This Report Useful: Regional Foresters, Regional Directors, Forest Supervisors, Recreation Staff Officers, State and County Park Managers, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, Private Sector Recreation Providers.

Keywords: Cultural diversity, ethnic minorities, workforce diversity, customer service, recreation opportunities.

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NATURAL RESOURCE CHALLENGES
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report investigates the outdoor recreational needs for culturally diverse populations in the Pacific Northwest. The study focuses on concerns and needs of minority groups in the Puget Sound Area, the largest population center of Washington State. Interviews with resource managers from agencies at the local, state and federal levels provided insights into their programs for serving minority needs. Asian, Black, Hispanic and Native American individuals were interviewed to determine their level of awareness, use, and expectations of National Forest System lands. This report offers ways of improving customer services for this target group. Though intended for use by the USDA Forest Service, they can apply to all resource agencies in the Northwest.

Ethnic minority populations are increasing in the Pacific Northwest. Asians are among the fastest growing minority group, largely because the Puget Sound Area is a port of entry with an existing diversity of cultures. Although the area is surrounded by a variety of public wildlands, a large percentage of ethnic minorities are not utilizing these natural resources for outdoor recreation. Existing resource programs are designed largely to benefit the American mass culture--a predominantly European American culture. Programs have not targeted the needs of a culturally diverse population in the northwest.

Little information is available about ethnic minority preferences for outdoor recreation. Researchers have studied Black-White ethnic differences in recreation and tended to lump minority groups into a single "minority" category. The influx of "New Americans", mostly from Southeast Asia and Latin America, has prompted the realization that America is not a "melting pot", but a "tossed salad"; a pluralistic society where each culture retains its own unique identity and recreational needs. Recent research has shifted towards a cross-cultural emphasis.

THE STUDY RESULTS

Resource agencies are not providing quality customer services to ethnic minorities. Interviews with resource managers indicates a general lack of awareness of the target customers. Most agencies have not established goals to improve customer services for culturally diverse populations. Bilingual signing, a commonly used technique to handle communications, is an ineffective method for bridging the gap between cultures. Translations are written for a higher educational level than the general population. Managers must consider cultural forms of recreation, facility design elements, preferred colors, subtle racism and discrimination, all of which influence recreation choice. Resource managers may misinterpret user behavior and recommend unsuitable actions for their resource situation.

Some minority groups have assimilated into the American mass culture while maintaining their cultural uniqueness. Asian, Black, Hispanic and Native American families have resided in Washington State for generations. Many of them recreate for similar reasons as the majority population. The "New Americans" have stronger cultural ties to their native lands, making it difficult to inform and educate them due to the cultural barriers. Generally, they are first generation Americans who are unfamiliar of the rules and regulations on public lands. They may not be knowledgeable of recreation opportunities, available services, proper equipment, prices, and places to recreate. Although some of these "New Americans" are familiar with normative forms of recreation, many are restricted by lower income and less leisure time. Consequently, they aspire to improve their socioeconomic status through education, hard work, and thriftiness.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The USDA Forest Service can provide leadership in customer services to ethnic minority populations. The close proximity of national forests to the Puget Sound Area is a marketing strength to promote greater awareness and use of public wildlands. Six national forests are within a day trip from Seattle. The agency's workforce diversity and creative organizational system provides a strong foundation for developing long term relationships with ethnic minority communities. Based on the study findings, the following management recommendations will improve this agency's programs and fulfill customer service goals.

INTERNAL PROCESS:

Clearly articulate the agency mission "Caring For the Land, Serving People."

Employees need to understand that it applies to all the people we serve, and those we may not be serving at this time. The agency must find better ways to serve a new customer.

Identify the champions or role models to lead the effort.

Select individuals with a high degree of cultural awareness and sensitivity. Culturally diverse individuals are excellent role models for developing relationships with the target customers. They provide credibility and trust among groups who have not previously dealt with the agency. They understand cultural differences.

Improve existing facilities and services.

Architectural design features, color schemes, peripheral services, on-site services, and personnel staffing are important considerations. Generally, group activities have higher importance than individual or small family activities.

Improve the agency's workforce diversity.

Actively inform minority populations of career employment opportunities and promote minority recruitment.

EXTERNAL PROCESS:

Listen carefully to ethnic minority groups.

Determine their concerns, needs, and fears regarding their participation on national forests. The place for service delivery begins at their community gathering places.

Bring minority groups to the forest environment.

Cultural awareness is important to a successful program. Allow employees to learn from minority groups through interaction and two-way communications afield. Promote the concept of recreation management excellence to address ALL customers.

Provide instruction, education, and general forest information to ethnic minority groups.

Identify "new" and traditionally used forest products that are overlooked by current management practices. Remove the culturally biased paradigms which lessen our ability to appreciate their needs and expectations.

Empower minorities to be advocates for their interests.

Involve the customer in the land management planning process and project implementation stages. These groups have been inadvertently excluded in this important public involvement and participation process.

Get feedback and continue to improve programs.

Initial success should not be measured in terms of recreation visitor days. It should be measured by the effort put forth towards promoting and providing quality services to this customer. These groups will become familiar with national forest opportunities and seek out services which benefit them.

JOINT PROCESS (Public Agencies, Minority Groups, Private Industry):

Inform ethnic minority youth of natural resource career and temporary employment opportunities.

Dispel stereotypes of menial or low-paying professions in natural resource management. Illustrate the ways in which a variety of professions interface with natural resource management.

Develop partnerships with resource agencies, private industry, and special interest organizations to support this effort.

Involve the various professional disciplines, e.g. engineering or computer sciences, to provide educational programs which promote applied technology under resource management applications. Realize that certain ethnic minorities are concentrating on basic survival needs making education and employment paramount. Create partnerships with recreation equipment suppliers to provide education and information on their products and services. Cooperatively work with state and federal resource agencies to inform and educate this new customer. These efforts will, in turn, promote cultural diversity throughout the realm of outdoor recreation.

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INTRODUCTION

"We CAN gain strength through diversity...this extends beyond employment; to all of our services and benefits to all the people we serve." --F. Dale Robertson, 1987
Chief, USDA Forest Service

The Pacific Northwest will experience enormous socioeconomic change as we face the 21st century. In this decade, the northwest will become more diverse economically, politically, and culturally. Major shifts are occurring in the Puget Sound Area. Outlying towns are becoming suburbs for Seattle, the state's largest metropolitan center. These small towns are focal points for new industries and economic growth, in a setting surrounded by ocean, coniferous forests and rugged mountains.

Greater numbers of people are expected to reside in the Puget Sound Area by the year 2000 as new industries create more jobs. Seventy-five percent of the state's population now lives in this area. Demographers predict the state will grow by more than 700,000 residents during this decade, mostly in the Puget Sound Area. The largest counties in Puget Sound-- King and Snohomish Counties are growing rapidly. As a port of entry, the region plays an important role in settlement of Southeast Asian immigrants. Cultural diversity will accompany this migration to create different customer needs and preferences.

People are coming here for an outdoor recreation lifestyle, too. The physical setting is an incentive for people to live in the northwest. Six national forests, three national parks, wildlife refuges, historical sites, numerous state and county parks are within close proximity to Seattle. These areas offer a wide spectrum of recreation opportunities ranging from urban to primitive experiences in a diversity of environments, including mountainous peaks, alpine meadows, coniferous forests, deltas, and coastal tidelands. The USDA Forest Service manages the largest share of public wildlands; including the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie, Gifford Pinchot, Olympic, Wenatchee, Okanogan, and Colville National Forests. All of these forests are within driving distance from Puget Sound.

Cultural Diversity and Social Change

It is essential to understand cultural diversity as ethnic minorities become increasingly represented in the northwest. By definition, culture is a set of common experiences and traditions shared by members of a particular group. It is the way of life of a people, the total of their learned behavioral patterns, attitudes, and collection of material things. Recreational aspects of culture may be expressed in dance, art, games, ornamental uses of native plants, architecture, and celebrations.

Social awareness of culture promotes sensitivity and understanding of differences from the American mass culture, which is essentially a European-American one. Cultural awareness bridges the gap for better cooperation in a pluralistic society, such as the United States. Awareness of cultural differences is an important means to lowering social barriers and creating social change as the state becomes more diverse.

"Culture shock" is trauma experienced in a different culture because of having to learn and cope with new cultural expectations. Ethnic minorities, especially new immigrants, are unfamiliar with policies, regulations, land management planning processes, and environmental ethics of American culture. They may be unfamiliar with normative forms of recreation or social aspects and benefits of outdoor recreation in the United States.

What is the USDA Forest Service Role?

The Forest Service has clearly articulated the intent to promote diversity in its services and workforce. The agency recognizes cultural diversity to be an emerging social issue. Its mission statement is "Caring for the Land, Serving People."

The Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (RPA) establishes a planning framework to meet societal changes. It directs the Forest Service to recommend management activities every five years. The design of the 1990 RPA Program considers contemporary issues and long-term strategies for resource programs. The proposed future role for multiple-use management includes increased outputs for recreation. The 1990 RPA identifies "changing recreation needs" as one contemporary issue facing the Forest Service. It further states that the agency's National Recreation Strategy (NRS) is intended to increase customer satisfaction with recreation that is provided from National Forest System lands. Partnership and cost-sharing are important ingredients to provide better customer service and expand recreational opportunities on the National Forest. NRS goal statements advocate service and satisfaction to urban residents and minority populations.

Why Is There a Need For Creative Solutions

Wildlands offer a variety of recreation opportunities and services for visitors, including camping, picnicking, hunting, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, biking, mountain climbing, skiing, and scenic drives which are enjoyed by millions throughout the Pacific Northwest. However, participants are mostly Euro-Americans, the dominant group. There is a noticeable lack of participation by ethnic minorities on public wildlands. Meanwhile, the demographics are changing the characteristics of today's recreationists. Public needs are evolving.

Land management policies and practices are established to benefit the American public. Paradoxically, ethnic minorities have not been empowered politically to influence resource policies, and until recently, have not been visible in policy-making or environmental advocacy. Their needs have not been addressed or satisfied through the legal or administrative system.

The Study Purpose

The purpose of this study is to identify issues and opportunities for providing quality customer services to ethnic minorities. It will examine the level of service which is currently provided by various resource agencies and recommend new techniques to satisfy diverse customer needs on public wildlands. This information is intended for use by the Forest Service Pacific Northwest Regional Forester, Director of Recreation, and Forest Supervisors as an initiative for implementation in the Pacific Northwest. It is useful information for natural resource agencies in determining their future land management strategies in light of a changing demography.

What This Study WILL NOT Accomplish

Anthropologists claim that culture cannot be fully understood without carefully examining it, documenting it, and immersing oneself into the day-to-day life. This study will not attempt to examine each cultural group in depth; rather, it will describe some basic differences relative to normative forms of recreation sought by the American mass culture.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There is a lack of cross-cultural research relating to recreation use and preference in the United States. Past studies focused on Black participation and preferences in outdoor recreation with little research on other ethnic populations. Research findings were grouped as "nonwhite" or "minority" without distinction between varying ethnic cultures. Agencies are discovering the need to understand cross-cultural patterns in outdoor recreation as America's population becomes increasingly diverse.

Research studies conclude that minorities participate less frequently than the white majority population in outdoor recreation. Researchers have found differences in use and preference among ethnic groups and "white majority". Three competing explanations are often used to answer the question of differences; the demographic explanation, the marginality explanation and ethnicity explanation.

The "demographic theory" cites population composition as the key factor. For example, the older population have greater propensity to engage in certain recreation activities while a varying age structure would have a contrasting use pattern.

The "marginality theory" suggests that certain minority populations recreate less frequently due to cumulative effects of social, economic and education discrimination and segregation practices. This theory assumes that recreation opportunities are nearly identical for minority and White majority populations; but minority groups (e.g. Blacks) have less income, less leisure time, less exposure to amenities of wildland resources, and inadequate means of transportation. Although research efforts substantiate the "marginality theory" in wildland recreation settings, studies by Dwyer (1988), Washburne and Wall (1980) indicate that a Black subculture may exist which influences leisure choice.

Researchers claim that cultural properties of Blacks differ from those of the European-American majority. (Meeker, Woods, Lucas 1973) Black mythology did not view nature as a place of refuge from the evils of civilization. Researchers noted that European myths such as the Garden (of Eden) don't match the value systems of Black culture. Other researchers theorize that Blacks have low concern of the environment due their higher priority to social issues during the civil rights movement (Taylor 1989). Black affiliation in environmental politics requires this group to follow the "stepping-stone" process whereby members join local activity-oriented recreation groups, then later become involved in the environmental movement by joining large national organizations. Blacks do not have the social prerequisites--i.e. fellowship in nature clubs, knowledge or opportunity to participate in outdoor recreation, that encourages political involvement for environmental issues. (Hendee, 1968).

Currently, the "ethnicity theory" is becoming widely accepted among social scientists. It suggests that ethnic minority subcultures are distinct from the American mass culture. This theory dismisses the "melting pot" idea and supports a pluralistic perspective whereby cultures remain diverse and unique. Each ethnic group strives to maintain its cultural "roots" in spite of pressures to assimilate into a dominant European-American mass culture. Ethnic boundaries are established; not only territorial boundaries but societal as well. Leisure choices are influenced by cultural factors; such as value system, ethnic identity, and social needs.

Interracial relations and prejudice play a role in under-representation by minorities in outdoor recreation. Observations by West (1989) suggests that research as been stifled by the "dominant paradigms in leisure research of minorities". Researchers fail to recognize their own cultural biases in survey design. Overt discrimination in public parks, housing and neighborhoods, and racial slurs at public places are grim reminders of interracial problems still plaguing American society.

Demographic changes in California have implications for future trends in the Pacific Northwest. Studies of the Angeles National Forest showed Hispanic and Asian groups to be more highly socialized as user groups. Asian groups preferred developed sites (California State University, Chico). Future research will examine user patterns of minorities, cross-cultural land ethics, values and expectations of culturally diverse publics in California (Pacific Southwest Forest and Range Experiment Station). A marketing plan for Mt. Hood National Forest identified cultural and economic barriers to Southeast Asian immigrants (Schuler, 1989).

There are cross-cultural studies focusing on visitors from various foreign countries. The National Park Service studied international visitors at Grand Canyon National Park (Machlis). Significant differences in occupation, age and free time activities were found between visitors of different nationalities. An assessment of Japanese visitors (Machlis and Field) concluded that demographic characteristics, the human institution, and leisure patterns in Japan are important considerations for park managers. In another study, scenery and aesthetic quality were measured for people from various countries (Palmer). This study found differences in scenic value between cultures being was rated higher among Asians than Hispanics or Caucasians.

Psychologists who study cultures have identified ancestral characteristics which influence social behavior among America's ethnic populations. They suggest that ethnic differences are deep-rooted into each culture and may influence recreation choices. Blacks and Hispanics place high importance on fellowship, interpersonal relationships, and socialization. Asians and Native Americans place high importance on the cohesiveness of the group or family. Conversely, Europeans place highest value on tasks and objects. (Nichols, 1988). This may explain the ethnic differences related to recreation choice. Europeans may have a greater desire for solitude and risk recreation, whereas, minority populations prefer group activities.

ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

The U.S. Census, for the first time, asked for information on ancestry (ethnicity) in 1980. According to the census, Washingtonians identified their ancestral roots to five geographic regions of the world: Africa and the Middle East (113,000), Asia and Pacific Islands (124,000), Europe (5,013,000), Mexico and Latin America (112,000) and North America (150,000). It is anticipated that the 1990 census will report significantly higher numbers, especially with the Asian and Hispanics. Minority population is estimated to be more than one-half million people or nearly 12 percent of the state's population (Washington State Office of Financial Management).

The overview of major ethnic groups is highlighted below. It provides a quick summation of their migration to Washington State, a chronology of significant historical events, and their current status. This information is referenced from A Guide to Ethnic Washington (Evergreen State College, 1988).

EUROPEANS: THE MAJORITY POPULATION

Missionaries, miners, and military were the earliest Europeans and Americans to migrate into the northwest following European and Russian exploration. The "Great Migration" brought settlers via the Oregon Trail. They were mostly Northern Europeans from the Midwest and East. The completion of the Northern Pacific Railroad in 1882 enabled direct travel to the northwest, bringing in more Eastern and Southern European immigrants who were fleeing political and economic strife in their native lands. The northwest offered commercial opportunities including farming, logging, mining, and fishing.

People of European ancestry are the largest segment of the state's population. Since statehood, this dominant "majority" group has controlled the political and policy-making processes in Washington State. They constitute the major power of government and business.

NATIVE AMERICANS: THE FIRST INHABITANTS

The Native Americans lived in close relationship to the land and resources for thousands of years. They enjoyed rich cultural and spiritual lifestyles from coastal to inland environments. European intervention disrupted this tradition. New diseases decimated large numbers of natives. Treaties forced Indian people from their traditional lands onto reservations. Throughout the years, they have maintained their culture, spirituality and pride.

There are 34 active tribes in Washington State. Twenty-six of these tribes have reservation land and eight are non-reservation tribes. Seven of the eight non-reservation tribes are petitioning for federal status and eligibility for health and educational services.

ASIANS AND PACIFIC ISLANDERS: ETHNICALLY AND CULTURALLY DIVERSE

People of Asian/Pacific Islander roots have origins in countries with varied languages, political and economic systems, religions and customs. They came to the northwest as laborers, and contributed greatly to economic growth of the state. The Asians/Pacific Islanders worked as loggers, miners, cannery workers, and farmers during the earlier years. They faced oppressive legislation with the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, Asian Exclusion Act 1924, and President Roosevelt's executive order which sent Japanese to internment camps during World War II.

New immigration laws and aftermath of the Vietnam War have increased the number and composition of Asians in Washington. The Refugee Resettlement Program has brought greater numbers of Southeast Asians to Washington. The 1988 Office of Financial Management (Washington) population report estimated 155,935 Asian/Pacific Islanders in the state.

AFRICAN AMERICAN: WASHINGTON'S BLACK POPULATION

The majority of Washington's Black population is composed of Americans, whose ancestors were brought to the western hemisphere as slaves in the eighteenth century. The largest number of Black immigrants were from Nigeria, the West Indies, and Ethiopia. The first free Blacks settled in Washington in the mid-1850s. Black churches, African American Leagues and a chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) were established from 1880-1912, in the Seattle-Tacoma area.

African Americans continue to seek status and power after the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Political strife in Haiti has brought exiles and refugees to America. Racial tensions have created increased numbers of emigrants and refugees from South Africa.

HISPANICS: FROM MEXICO, CARRIBEAN, CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA

The first Hispanic immigrants to the northwest were of Mexican ancestry. During World War II, Mexican laborers came to work in agriculture in Eastern Washington. In the 1950s, they migrated to Western Washington for better paying jobs and broader educational opportunities. Since the 1960s, the political instability in Central and South America has brought emigration of exiles and refugees seeking asylum in Washington State. Many of the new immigrants are following the path of early Mexicans by taking agricultural jobs in Eastern Washington. Hispanics are the majority group in some rural communities here.

METHODS

This project has two major components:

- (1) Interviews with resource managers
- (2) Interviews with ethnic minority groups

The objectives of the interviews are:

- (1) Determine the level of minority use on public wildlands.
- (2) Identify agency philosophies and goals relative to cultural diversity and customer service.
- (3) Stimulate in-depth dialogue with resource managers and target customers regarding their motives, feelings, and perception of minority participation in outdoor recreation.
- (4) Understand cultural differences which influence recreation choices and use.
- (5) Identify the external environments which pose threats or opportunities to reaching Forest Service goals and objectives.

INTERVIEWS WITH RESOURCE MANAGERS

Telephone and in-person interviews are conducted with professionals from Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation, King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, Washington Department of Fisheries, Washington Department of Wildlife, National Park Service, and USDA Forest Service. These professionals are public affairs specialists, outdoor recreation planners, law enforcement officers, and natural resources managers.

Interviews are used to determine the Forest Service's marketing position relative to alternative services or products available through the other resource management agencies.

Standardized questions are used for these interviews. A description of the questions is given in Table I.

INTERVIEWS WITH ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS (CUSTOMER ANALYSIS)

Telephone, personal and group interviews are conducted with representatives of ethnic minority populations. Minority spokesmen are comprised of respected individuals from each ethnic group. They are civil rights activists, community leaders, social workers, educators, and public officials. Selections of these individuals are based on their affiliation with a particular minority group. For example, the spokesmen from Washington State Commission for Asian American Affairs and Southeast Asian assistance programs represent the viewpoints of Asians Americans.

The minority population is segmented into specific target markets. They include; Asians, Blacks, Hispanics, and Native Americans. The hypothesis is that each of the segmentation represents different cultural needs and concerns.

Asian Americans (American-born). This segment has assimilated into America mass culture while maintaining strong cultural and ethnic identity. Interviews are conducted with Washington State Asian Affairs Commission personnel, public school administrators, and civil rights activists.

Asian Americans (Foreign-born). It includes Chinese, Koreans, Japanese, Filipinos, and Southeast Asian immigrants from Vietnam, Laos, Kampuchea, and Thailand. Interviews are conducted with refugee assistance program directors, Washington State Asian Affairs Commission personnel, public school administrators and interested citizens.

African American (Blacks). It includes African Americans who have assimilated into the mass culture while maintaining ethnic differences. Interviews are conducted with community leaders. It includes representatives from the news media, community service organizations, and civil rights activists.

Hispanics (American-born and Foreign) Interviews are conducted with Hispanic community leaders representing multiple countries in Latin America. Representatives are community leaders, civil rights activists and natural resource professionals.

Native Americans. Interviews are conducted with Native American leaders and civil rights activists, representing the views of Washington's tribes and reservations.

Standardized questions are utilized for individual and group interviews. Discussions about ethnic and cultural differences and preferences follow the formal interviewing. Statements by individuals are not referenced by name to maintain confidentiality.

A description of the interview questions is shown in Table II.

TABLE I
Questions for Resource Manager Interviews

Question No.	Description
1.	Are ethnic minority people using your agency's public lands.
2.	How do they utilize these lands? Do they recreate, conduct commercial activities?
3.	Specifically, how are they recreating? Picnicking? Camping? Driving? Hiking?
4.	Are you aware of specific programs being provided by your agency to improve service to ethnic minorities?
5.	Would you like to add any further comments regarding this subject matter?

TABLE II
Questions for Ethnic Minority Interviews

Hello, I'm _____, from Okanogan National Forest in Northcentral Washington. I'm here to ask you some questions concerning recreation use of National Forests by ethnic minority populations. I'm conducting this interview for a project sponsored by Clemson University. I will ask several standard questions, then open the discussion for informal information exchange. Individual responses will be kept confidential.

Question No.	Description
1.	Are ethnic minority people aware of the National Forests surrounding the Seattle area?
2.	How does your group use the National Forest? What do you do? Where do you go?
3.	How does your group recreate? For Example: Picnicking? Camping? Driving? Hiking?
4.	What can agencies like the Forest Service or National Park Service do to improve its service to your group?
5.	How can we improve relationships with your group?

Thank you. Those are the standard questions for this interview. What are some cultural aspects of your minority group that ought to be considered by the Forest Service?

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

INTERVIEW RESULTS WITH NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGERS

Twenty managers participated in the survey, representing natural resource and recreation-oriented agencies at the city, county, state and federal levels. They were recreation planners, park rangers, and natural resource managers for their respective agencies. Overall, these managers indicated that their respective agencies are not providing quality customer services for ethnic minority groups. Minor attempts are being made to provide bilingual written communication at major visitor destinations. Generally, cultural diversity is not highlighted in their management direction, nor is it actively integrated into their resource programs.

Recreation planners for Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation mentioned that their department has not focused their attention towards minority recreation use or preference. User data has not been collected; therefore, they are unable to determine level or types of use by ethnic groups. This agency provides urban-oriented services at community recreation centers, playgrounds, and few rural parks. They indicate that minorities utilize community recreation centers and picnic areas for cultural celebrations and festivals. Discovery Park provides urban wildland recreation opportunities and Native American cultural center. Several playgrounds are named after notable minority leaders. These facilities have architectural designs which compliment that person's cultural identity. Currently, the department is collecting demographic information and a needs assessment for future management.

King County Natural Resources and Parks has not collected user data on their lands and could not provide estimated recreational use by ethnic group. This agency administers developed urban parks, rural parks, and a few wildland parks. They have observed some minority use of their facilities, but do not have programs specifically designed for this target audience.

Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission has not studied minority use; however, some park rangers have identified certain use patterns. A recreation planner discussed minority use of state parks by Hispanics and Asians in Central Washington. Hispanics use their parks for picnicking, while Asians are observed fishing at such places as Moses Lake. Crappies and other warm-water fish are preferred species which closely resemble fish from Asia, according to minority sources. Much of their minority use occurs near communities with high ethnic minority representation. According to a State recreation planner, this agency is not pursuing special emphasis programs for ethnic minority groups.

A park ranger at Peace Arch State Park observes a great number of Southeast Asians using his facility. He speculates that picnicking must be a favored activity of Southeast Asians. Note: According to Southeast Asian sources, picnicking is not a particularly desired recreation activity. The park is used as a convenient "staging area" for receiving goods not obtainable in stores within the United States, such as imported food, clothing, and jewelry. Adjacent parks in British Columbia offers the opportunity to harvest seaweed and shellfish for consumption.

Washington State Department of Fisheries and Department of Ecology have been proactive in providing public information for ethnic minorities. Nearly ten years ago, these departments addressed a problem of shellfish poisoning and over-harvesting among Southeast Asians. Law enforcement officials from the fisheries department identified three primary groups; Vietnamese, Laotians, and Thai. They listed several problems encountered with these Asian groups:

- 1) Asians were unfamiliar with regulations, and perceived them as barriers.
- 2) Their culture prefers shellfish and sea products.
- 3) These Asians did not understand the English language.
- 4) Asian culture displays different body language.
- 5) Harvest was for the "whole social group" rather than individual use.

These problems were resolved using creative solutions. They contracted with Asian artists and interpreters to develop posters which were attractive to the target group. Personnel received cultural awareness and sensitivity training through Asian refugee assistance centers. There are on-going sessions to train enforcement officers and inform the Asian consumers of the health risks and rules.

Washington State Department of Wildlife has studied attitudes and preferences of hunters and anglers, but have been unsuccessful in reaching minority groups. In a recent study, they indicated that language barriers among Asians and Hispanics were reasons for low samples. Currently, they do not have programs designed for satisfying cultural diversity. Game violations, poaching, and misunderstanding of Native American treaty rights are issues that reinforce negative stereotypes and conflicts among recreationists.

National Parks receives visitation by minorities, including international tourists. This agency does not collect minority use data at their facilities. According to park rangers, the visitation is low for ethnic minorities. Multi-lingual information is available for international tourists in publications at Mt. Rainier National Park. Most interpretive programs are designed for the American mass culture.

Ethnic minorities are using the national forests for recreation, commercial and subsistence activities. They are participating in normative recreation activities, collecting forest products for consumption and commercial sale. Ranger districts are not required to collect visitor use information by ethnicity, therefore, the recorded data has low reliability. The agency does not provide on-site services for ethnic minorities except at Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument. They have developed a multi-lingual pamphlet in four languages; Spanish, French, German and Japanese intended chiefly for the international traveler. The Portland Area has conducted limited field trips for Southeast Asian immigrants to increase their awareness of Mt. Hood National Forest. Youth conservation programs, e.g. Youth Conservation Corps and Job Corps, provide work-related experiences for minorities.

National forests are used by Hispanics for subsistence hunting in Eastern Washington. This activity occurs near rural communities. Some Hispanics have been observed at small community ski areas, such as Loop Ski Area near Okanogan. Some recreation construction projects may have unintentional benefits for minorities. An interpretive trail on the Wenatchee National Forest has become a popular swimming hole for Hispanics, promoted only through word-of-mouth contacts within this cultural group.

RESULTS FROM ETHNIC MINORITY INTERVIEWS

Thirty individuals participated in the minority survey. According to the respondents, major factors limiting ethnic minorities' recreational use of wildlands are education and income. The "marginality theory" and "ethnicity theory" both apply to minority participation on public lands. Generally, affluent individuals among these groups participate in recreation activities more than low-income individuals who are striving to meet basic survival needs.

American-born Asians and Blacks have assimilated into the mass culture, while retaining unique differences from the mainstream. Both groups stressed the importance of community interaction to encourage relationships with natural resource agencies. They are somewhat familiar with forest opportunities, but choose urban rather than wildland activities. Safety, knowledge of proper gear, cost, and subtle discrimination or racism are concerns which influence their leisure choices. They perceive the agency favorably; as "rangers" not "police". They consider role models as necessary contact people. Family participation is important to both groups. Asians voluntarily recreate in a family or community group. Blacks consider their youths' interest as a catalyst for family and group participation. Both ethnic groups are receptive to increased environmental education and awareness, through instruction, advertising in community newspapers, and interaction with local communities.

The Hispanic population is split between Mexican Americans and "New Americans" from various Latin American countries. The early Hispanics have assimilated into America mass culture while retaining their cultural identity. Many of the early Hispanic immigrants participate in normative recreation activities, while favoring traditional forms of celebration. Filipinos, categorically Asians, have cultural similarities with Hispanics. Day use activities, such as picnicking, are popular activities for extended family events. They have leisure time and larger disposable income. Facilities designed for large group activities are preferred over single family or small group sites for recreation. Vibrant colors, festive celebrations, music and dance are important considerations for meeting their needs.

"New American" Hispanics are striving to satisfy basic survival needs. They lack the disposable income and leisure time to participate in normative forms of recreation. Generally, they express overwhelming support of extended family day-use opportunities in a developed setting. Their recreation is festive--with music and dance. Literacy among this group is a barrier facing resource managers. Consequently, bi-lingual signs are ineffective techniques for communication. Informational signing should show people with brown skin. Facility design criteria should consider color schemes and architecture which meet their cultural expectations.

Native Americans are categorized into two groups: urban and reservation residents. Generally, those living in metropolitan areas participate in normative recreation activities. Sports and traditional Native games are important leisure pastimes. Those living on tribal land utilize the surrounding national forests for subsistence and spirituality. Berry picking is a popular activity on non-reservation lands. Vision quests and other traditional religious activities occur on public lands. Hunting and fishing on public lands is often cost prohibitive; therefore, these activities occur on tribal land. It is important to recognize differences in viewpoints between various tribes, e.g. Yakima versus Umatilla tribes.

Native Americans participate in day-use activities, such as picnicking and camping, near their reservations. Fishing is both a recreation and subsistence activity among this group. They are sensitive to environmental impacts onto traditional use areas. Native Americans are politically active in environmental and social issues dealing with treaty rights, spiritual and religious activities on public wildlands.

Foreign-born minorities are diverse and have unique customer needs. They have stronger cultural ties to their native lands. Of the Asian population, Chinese, Koreans and Japanese are accustomed to certain forms of recreation. Downhill skiing, hiking, biking, mountaineering, and driving-for-pleasure are familiar activities in their native lands. They harvest "shitake" mushrooms, shellfish, and forest products. They are not aware of the recreation opportunities of National Forest System lands, but are willing to learn of places to recreate. They have disposable income and available leisure time.

One disadvantage facing the foreign-born Asians (and Hispanics) is their unfamiliarity with some recreation activities which may be less common in their native lands. Fly-fishing and hunting are activities requiring extensive knowledge and skill. They are uncomfortable and embarrassed with their lack of knowledge about equipment, interpreting rules and regulations. These skills are attained at earlier ages among the American mass culture.

Southeast Asian immigrants are the least familiar with recreation opportunities on the National Forest. These "New Americans" are eager to learn the rules of the game and become familiar with the mass culture lifestyle. Although their homelands have national parks and forest reserves, they are unfamiliar with western environmental ethics. Some refugees suffer from post-war trauma and fear dense forest environments. Camping has connotations of a refugee relocation camp. Shellfish harvesting is a familiar activity, but regulation is a new concept. Beargrass and salal are commercially harvested on forests, but conflict with agency regulations. There are opportunities to inform and educate these groups on resource management policies and practices.

Hill Tribe people (under the national category of Laotian) have strong agricultural lifestyles. This group is perhaps the farthest removed from government rules and regulations. Their rural lifestyle has alienated them from other Southeast Asians. The Hill Tribe people do not share their capitalistic values and have been isolated from urbanization. They are hard working, lack disposable income or leisure time. Presently, they are among the most difficult to influence. Forest use may be encouraged by educating and informing them of the forest products which are available on the national forest, e.g. edible foods from coniferous forests.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Forest Service has the opportunity to provide leadership in resource management for cultural diversity. Realizing that the customer is rapidly changing into a culturally diverse audience, the Forest Service can be on the leading edge in providing quality customer services and products to a full range of user groups.

There are several strengths of the Forest Service:

1. The nearest National Forest is only 45 minutes from Seattle. Six national forests are within a day trip from Puget Sound.
2. National Forests provide a variety of goods and services not available on other public wildlands.
3. The Forest Service is already culturally diverse. Employees are key role models to inform and educate new customers. They have diverse educational backgrounds to promote workforce diversity goals.
4. Forest Service leadership philosophy promotes creativity and innovation.
5. Forest Service goals, and the National Recreation Strategy, provides the impetus for improved customer service.

Steps should be taken immediately in breaking new ground. A successful program should not be measured in terms of recreation visitor-days. Data collection techniques are not reliable and require considerable cost and effort to maintain. Rather, success should be measured by the long-term relationships that are developed from a planned program. Partnerships, recreation facility modifications, workforce diversity, and employee contributions are all indicators of success which can be documented.

The following "steps of the journey" are essential elements to consider during the process of service marketing to these new customers. It requires the commitment by resource agencies, ethnic minority groups, and private industry to achieve cultural diversity in natural resource management.

INTERNAL PROCESS

Clearly articulate the agency's goals and objectives.

Emphasize the agency mission, national recreation strategy, workforce diversity goals and regional goals as they apply to ethnic minorities. Establish specific regional/area goals to meet this recreation challenge. Communicate these goals both internally and externally.

Identify the role models or champions to lead the effort.

Empower culturally diverse employees to design and implement the programs. They provide visibility, credibility, and a vital communication link with cultural groups. A center of excellence would be developed to concentrate on this issue. Incentive pay and career advancement opportunities are important links between contribution and outcome.

Improve existing facilities and services to accomodate the new customers.

New facility designs should meet diverse needs. Be cognizant of subtle barriers; colors, architectural design, personnel, peripheral commercial services. Develop facilities to meet their expectations. Prepare programs to meet minority interests, e.g. "shitake" mushrooming expedition, Chinese historical mining tour, or Native American native plant interpretative program.

Recruit a diverse workforce to effectively serve the customer.

Workforce diversity allows us to perceive customer needs through a variety of perspectives--cultural, gender, age, and impairment. Minorities have basic survival needs; i.e. employment, housing. Resource management agencies and private industry can provide jobs to meet these priorities. Certain groups have high aspirations for careers in traditionally urban occupations which can be met by the agency. Engineering, computer sciences, business administration, and communications are popular career paths which fit agency needs. Use existing minority outreach centers, local schools, and community settings for contacts.

EXTERNAL PROCESS:

Listen carefully to ethnic minority groups.

Each ethnic community has its social gathering place. The benevolent society buildings, churches, and community centers are forums to begin relationships with groups. Understand ethnic minority needs through active listening.

Bring minority groups to the forest environment.

Cultural awareness is important to a successful program. Inspire employees of the benefits and opportunities which lie ahead. Involve everybody. Conduct cultural sensitivity and awareness training. Participate in hands-on activities with minority groups to understand each others' perspectives. Understand ethnic minority needs, rather than relying on American mass culture paradigms.

Provide instruction, environmental education, and general forest information to ethnic minority groups.

Increase their awareness of the products and services available. It is a two-way street: learn what they want and how the Forest Service can provide it. Conduct field trips to introduce the potential customer of the services. Word-of-mouth information will circulate within the community. Utilize several teaching techniques to insure the agency has met their specific learning style. Listen for reactions to goods and services, improving on them accordingly.

Empower minorities to be advocates for their interests.

Involve the target groups in the forest planning processes. They must learn the "rules of the game" and participate in the planning process. Knowledge of the rules will empower them to be involved in change through the public involvement process or legislative action.

JOINT PROCESS (Public Agencies, Minorities, Private Industry)

Develop partnerships with resource agencies, private industry, and special interest organizations to support this effort.

Encourage private enterprise to become partners to serve a new customer. Fellowships with resource organizations creates trust and integrity, and increases one's awareness of environmental issues. Provide training on proper selection and use of equipment. Develop partnerships with timber companies to encourage youth to consider natural resource career paths. "Creative swiping" of the NASA space camp might be a Forest Engineering Camp.

Inform minority youth of natural resource employment opportunities.

Diffuse stereotypes of menial or low-paying professions in resource management. Use specialized recruiting efforts directed at minority colleges and universities. Develop role models, financial support programs, and academic assistance programs with universities. Utilize an array of recruiting strategies, including the cooperative education program, to recruit and retain minorities both in the public and private sector.

There are some specific steps which can be taken to expedite the necessary changes for improved customer satisfaction in this culturally-diverse Pacific Northwest. The following action items are important recommendations to implement immediately:

1. Address this topic to the Regional Leadership Team. Recommend inclusion of these concepts into specific regional goals. Key players to endorse the concept includes the Regional Forester, Deputy Regional Foresters, Director of Recreation, Director of Personnel Management, Director of Civil Rights and Forest Supervisors.
2. Create a "regional initiative" to increase relationships with various ethnic minority groups. Establish funding for a special program to attack this issue. Recruit minority role models to develop and implement the program. Conduct field trips with ethnic minority groups and invite them to provide cultural sensitivity and awareness training for Forest Service employees.
3. Address this topic to other agencies, especially the state and federal agencies where wildland recreation is emphasized. Propose agreements with these agencies for cooperative programs to promote and improve recreation for cultural diversity.
4. Address this topic to special interest groups and resource-oriented professional societies (e.g. National Association of Interpreters or Society of American Foresters) for increased awareness of this issue. Formal presentations and write-ups for professional journals will reinforce its importance.
5. Establish advisory groups to become involved with activities of the National Forests. Monitor accomplishments and improve the program accordingly. Insure a partner relationship. Determine if the agency is addressing cultural diversity needs in every phase of project planning.

SUMMARY

Outdoor recreation is central to the quality of life in the Pacific Northwest. Area residents recreate outdoors for numerous reasons: for physical wellness, excitement, celebration, solitude, socializing, environmental awareness and education. Recreation activities take many forms and are as diverse as the ethnic composition of Washington State. As the demographics change, resource managers are facing new recreation challenges to meet the needs of a growing culturally diverse population in the northwest.

Recreation management has focused on benefits for the American mass culture, and has disregarded the quality of recreation service delivery to minority groups. Managers must respond to low minority participation, low awareness and existing cultural barriers to satisfy new customer needs. Involving minorities in the land management and legislative processes will enable them to be advocates for culturally diverse interests.

Establishing long-term relationships with ethnic minority communities for mutual dialogue will help managers understand customer needs. The responsibility for affecting social changes relative to recreation services belongs to all recreation providers, including resource and recreation managers, recreation industries, and special interest groups. Cultural considerations are important for identifying recreation preferences, facility design criteria, and workforce requirements. Working with diverse groups requires leadership from minority role models and devoted "champions" who can effectively reduce the cultural barriers.

Solving this recreation deficit involves social change--changing the way resource managers and recreation industry provide services by transforming cultural barriers into positive recreation opportunities. Making resource agencies responsive to ethnic minority needs will achieve the goal of outdoor recreation for a culturally-diverse Pacific Northwest.

"At night when the streets of your cities and villages are silent
and you think them deserted, they will throng with the returning
hosts that once filled them and still love this beautiful land.
The White Man will never be alone." ---Chief Seattle, Dwamish tribe
of the Pacific Northwest

APPENDIX A

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APPENDIX B
RESULTS FROM INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP INTERVIEWS

Every target group was contacted and interviewed. The responses are paraphrases from responses.

INTERVIEW WITH ASIAN AMERICANS (EARLY IMMIGRANTS)

The interview responses were received from representatives of the Commission on Asian American Affairs, Multi-lingual educators, and individual of this ethnic group.

Question 1: Are ethnic minority people aware of the National Forests surrounding the Seattle Area?

Response: American-born Asians are familiar with the National Forests.

They read about local natural resource issues from newspapers and other media. Schools provide exposure to these areas.

Many recreate on forest lands. Asian Americans have somewhat integrated with American culture in some respects.

Asians may not understand distinctions between state and federal agencies. They realize there are public forest lands.

Asians use the forest for a variety of activities, including skiing, mushrooming, and other activities enjoyed by many Americans.

Question 2: How does your group use the National Forests? What do you do? Where do you go?

Response: Asians use forests with diverse friends. Often, they will recreate with Caucasian friends...from schools or workplace. They have family outings, drive through the forests.

Asians visit Wilderness areas, enjoy camping, fishing, harvesting "shitake" mushrooms from the Cascades. Some participate in mountaineering, skiing, and other forms of challenging (risk) recreation activities. They camp on the coastal forests.

Asians visit with families, elderly groups have guided tours to major destination areas such as Olympic or Mount Rainier National Parks. There are active Asian Boy Scout troops here.

Skiing is a popular activity. It is a school-sponsored program. Asian parents learn to ski from their children's interest.

Environmental education is sponsored through schools. Field trips are conducted onto the forest. The Seattle School District sponsors environmental education, using facilities on the Gifford Pinchot National Forest at Cispus.

Youth Conservation Corps is an avenue for participating in the forest.

Question 3: **How does your group recreate? Example: Picnicking, Camping.**

Response: (American-born) Asians participate in all forms of recreation, although not all Asians participate in outdoor recreation.

Similar to urban people of any culture, some choose urban activities over forest ones. Individual choices prevail.

There are active scouting programs in local communities, sponsored through local churches.

Question 4: **What can agencies like the Forest Service or National Park Service do to improve its service to your group?**

Response: Public information is important.

People are hesitant to recreate without proper knowledge of equipment or places to go.

Sponsored activities, such as guided tours, are desirable.

Some Asians prefer the comfort and security of cabins. This would be desirable on National Forests.

Environmental education is provided in schools, but does not necessarily encourage future use of the forest.

Career paths don't usually focus on natural resources. Perhaps role modeling and career counselling are needed.

Question 5: **How can we improve relationships with your group?**

Response: Communication with local newspapers, community groups and community participation are important relationships.

Each ethnic group has its own contact people; such as the Japanese American Citizen's League, Chong Wa Benevolent Association, and Refugee Service Centers.

Utilize the Asian newspapers to inform people of job opportunities, things to do, and where to recreate.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSIONS WITH ASIAN AMERICANS ABOUT THEIR CULTURE

Often called the "Model Minority", third and fourth generation Asians are at crossroads. Although many are highly educated professionals, they are faced with discrimination by mass-media, corporate business and government. Today, anti-Asian quotas at U.S. colleges, slower movement in upper-management promotions, and redress to Japanese internment of WWII are issues facing Asians. Their political agenda is focused on social rather than environmental issues. However, these minority groups are well-informed about the opportunities on public wildlands.

RESPONSE FROM AFRICAN-AMERICANS

African American representatives include a Black community newspaper editor, community center staff, and employees of the Forest Service.

Question 1: **Are ethnic minority people aware of the National Forests surrounding the Seattle area?**

Response: Black population awareness of national forests is low.

Media gives people an awareness of opportunities, but Black youth are not well informed about it.

People are unaware of the responsibilities and management of the national forest or park. There is little visibility.

Adults are not familiar with the National Forests, therefore the youth are not aware.

The National Forests are not promoted in Black communities.

Question 2: How does your group use the National Forests? What do you do? Where do you go?

Response: Blacks participate in low numbers, but enjoy most activities offered on the National Forest.

Some blacks participate in various forms of outdoor recreation, usually sponsored activities or events.

Few own recreational vehicles. Blacks do not see other blacks in campgrounds. The comfort level is low.

Some blacks participate in skiing, both cross country and downhill. Parents with outdoor experience pass it on to their children.

Barriers are money, awareness of opportunities, single parent family structure.

Black youth use the National Forests when the parents are involved and informed about the areas.

Question 3: How does your group recreate?

Response: Group activities are important. There is strength in numbers. Kids are more comfortable in groups.

School and community sponsored activities are ways to use the National Forests without feeling insecure or threatened in this environment.

All activities would be desirable if the opportunities were promoted in the urban center.

Blacks drive vehicles through the National Forest. They use developed, paved roads but may not venture off the pavement because of they lack information about these areas.

Blacks recreate in activities that are familiar to them. People choose activities based on their perception. Price to recreate on the National Forest is perceived to be expensive, such as purchasing the right equipment.

Question 4: What can agencies like the Forest Service or National Park Service do to improve its service to your group?

Response: Open the door, promote the Forest Service opportunities.

Bring "role models" into the community and schools.

The Forest Service presents Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl to rural schools near the forest, but avoid the inner city.

Conduct field trips. Environmental camps should be provided. Get the children involved, then the parents will get involved.

The facilities and opportunities are fine. Work with the people to get a higher awareness of opportunities.

The gift of education is the key.

Question 5: How can we improve relationships with your group?

Promote the National Forests to the Black community.

Go to the schools, work with the children.

Be active with the urban league, influential black leaders.

Demonstrate a willingness to "reach out"

The Central Area Youth Association would like to work with the agency, develop programs through CAYA. They have a summer youth program which could bring children to the National Forest.

Have a "media blitz" to get people informed.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSIONS WITH AFRICAN-AMERICANS ABOUT THEIR CULTURE

Blacks feel assimilated into America mass culture. Their history in America has forced them to live within the dominant culture. The social barriers, such as discrimination, are apparent to them. Forest Service black employees state that "managers need to be held accountable for accomplishing workforce goals and program goals, e.g. recreation management, to adequately serve the Black community. Outreach is critical. Interest and support of Forest Service programs require stronger partnerships with the public schools in the inner city.

INTERVIEWS WITH NATIVE AMERICANS

Representatives from tribes, civil rights activists, and employees of the Forest Service were interviewed.

1. Are people aware of the National forests surrounding the Seattle area?

Awareness of the management of National Forests is low among the total population. Top managers are informed about land management issues especially when there are potential effects on reservation resources, such as the fisheries.

2. How does your group use the National Forest? What do you do? Where?

Native Americans use the National Forest. Urban natives who left the reservation setting will use the forests like everyone else. People who are living on reservations will use the forest, exercising the treaty or territorial rights. These are aboriginal uses, such as berry-picking, hunting and spriritual activities.

Recreation use is low. There is incidental use where National Forests border reservation land.

3. How does your group recreate?

Recreation for Whites is not necessarily recreation for Native Americans. Food gathering, for example, is a survival and spiritual practice.

In the urban setting, athletics are important activities. In the outdoors, day activities are popular. Fishing and picnicking in large family settings are primary activities. Hiking is a means to get somewhere.

Reservations are looking at future opportunities to provide recreation on Native lands. Elders are concerned with losing the natural resources if this occurs. The younger tribal members are interested in the monetary gain from increased commercialism on the reservation.

4. What can agencies like the Forest Service do to improve its service to your group?

The reservation provides for the specific needs of Native Americans. For example, hunting and fishing is more appropriate on the reservation to avoid the cost to hunt on National Forests.

There is a difference between urban people and reservation residents. Those living in urban settings have grown accustomed to American (mass) culture, and may recreate in different ways from the reservation resident.

Reservation people may use facilities close to their boundaries. In these cases, large family facilities are desirable. Natural settings are more desirable than highly developed ones.

It is important to recognize impacts to Native rights. Developing campgrounds on National Forests may have downstream impacts on fisheries for Natives. Be aware of impacts to Native ancestral practices.

Make more picnicking facilities, have bar-b-que pits available...things for family gatherings.

5. How can we improve relationships with your group?

Open communication with tribal leaders is important. The agency should look at opportunities to promote Native heritage, such as interpretive displays. Involve the elders.

Partnership ventures should be encouraged.

Elders are reluctant to share Native ways without building a relationship.

INTERVIEWS WITH FOREIGN-BORN ASIANS

Interviews were conducted with a refugee assistance center director, Asian bi-lingual school administrator, and Asian American Affairs Commission personnel.

1. Are people aware of the National Forests surrounding the Seattle area?

Southeast Asians, specifically Cambodians and Loatians, use forests for harvesting mushrooms, salal and beargrass. Salal is used for decorative floral arrangements.

Generally, there is low awareness among Southeast Asians, the most recent immigrants to Washington State. However, they are discovering outdoor opportunities such as gathering plants, hunting small game and fishing.

The variation of culture is an important consideration. The Hill Tribes include the Hmong, a rural people who enjoy agriculture. Hmong have settled near Carnation, WA...near the forest. Other Hill people include the Mien and Kmhmu, who also enjoy the rural lifestyle. Their orientation is so different, they require training and exposure to Western cultures.

The Koreans, Taiwanese, and Japanese immigrants are familiar with National Forests. Many participate in activities, such as skiing. They read about the management of natural resources through the media.

2. How does your group use the National Forest? What did you do? Where did you go?

Major destinations, such as Mt. Rainier National Park, are popular attraction which are easy to find. Many new immigrants are beginning to ski, through school-sponsored programs. People from Taiwan and Japan are familiar with skiing. These opportunities exist in their native lands. Taiwanese, Koreans and Japanese are not the most recent immigrants. They have saved money, are established within their communities, have disposable income and time to play.

The Loatians, for example, are not wealthy people. They may not be using the National Forest because they're struggling to survive and must work hard.

Forests provide opportunities to pick berries, mushrooms, ornamental plants, and other foods.

3. How does your group recreate? For example: Picnicking? Camping? Driving?

Clam digging, harvest forest plants, fishing, and limited hunting are activities of Southeast Asians. Hunting is not extremely popular because of the barriers which exist, such as complicated regulations and discomfort of purchasing the necessary equipment.

Money is a factor among some immigrant populations. Therefore, they are striving to meet social needs (food, clothing, home) and cannot afford the time to work. This is similar to the early immigrants.

Money is not a factor for other new immigrants. For example, Koreans and Taiwanese people are not "poor" or "refugees". They have disposable income.

Hiking clubs exist in Japan and Taiwan. This activity is popular, but the lack of information does not encourage use.

The wilderness is unfamiliar to some Asian cultures. It reminds them of restricted places where Communists are located. They need to be re-educated, and understand the American values of wilderness.

Some Southeast Asians will go camping, but prefer security in cabins or shelters. To many refugees, camping is compared to refugee relocation camps...not a positive experience.

A Washington State Park employee mentioned the popularity of the Peace Arch Park for picnicking. Is picnicking important to Southeast Asians?

Food is an important socially. People will travel to Canada to purchase food which is banned here. This park serves as a place to purchase or obtain food or material things which cannot be purchased in the U.S.

Also, you will find Southeast Asian in Canada's bordering parks...consuming food before re-entering the U.S.

4. What can agencies like the Forest Service do to improve its service to your group?

Educate people of the opportunities on the National Forest. The word will spread internally to others in the community.

Asians recreate in family groups. If the children are participating in forest activities, then parents will follow.

Role models are important. Asians are achievers and hard workers. Show them the benefits offered by working for the National Forest.

The regulations for hunting and fishing are too complicated. There is a need make information easier to understand.

Asians perceive racial tensions. They feel threatened by the white majority if several Asians go fishing at someone else's favorite fishing spot.

5. How can we improve relationships with your group?

Cultural awareness is important. The refugee assistance centers conduct awareness sessions for natural resource agencies.

There are vast differences in culture. People need to be taught the rules and regulations in the U.S.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS BY ASIANS:

Southeast Asians were violating the State regulations on shellfish harvest. Consequently, the Washington State Department of Ecology conducted awareness sessions through a Thurston County Refugee Center. Law enforcement officers learned to understand the body language of Southeast Asians--looking downwards is respectful to Asians, not concealment or guilt. The State created multi-lingual regulatory signing and refugees passed on information to their community.

Southeast Asians harvest beargrass and salal for ornamental plant arrangements. They have become very industrious in this commercial venture without regard to the resource regulations, such as permits. They do not understand the problems created by over-harvest (their homeland may practice resource exploitation) and require guidance.

They have a strong work ethic which is perceived by some to be exploitive, particularly in harvesting of natural resources.

INTERVIEW WITH THE "NEW AMERICAN HISPANICS"

The question and answer format was not used for this group. According to community leaders, this population is rarely recreating on the National Forest. This group, consisting of new Mexicans, Carribeans, Central and South Americans are struggling to survive in the United States. Many are working as agricultural laborers and have not established residency.

Management techniques such as bi-lingual information signing may not be useful to this group. Many new immigrants are unable to read, especially formal Spanish language. They may have certain colloquial dialects including "Mexi-Tex" or "Baya Californian". There are regional differences in language that are difficult to decipher.

There is a strong sense of family among these groups. Their recreation includes festivals and music in a large group setting.

Recreation, as seen by American (mass) culture is a low priority. Hiking requires special shoes. For these people, it may be a luxury to own two pairs of shoes.

Role models and interpersonal relations with the community are important considerations.

Use colors and designs which have Hispanic appeal. Show Hispanics in posters. Photographs are not necessary, but people with "colored skin" is an invitation.